

**IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE
BEFORE THE BOARD OF PATENT APPEALS AND INTERFERENCES**

Patent Application No. 10/797,382

Confirmation No. 3246

Applicant: Marian TRINKEL et al.

Filed: March 10, 2004

TC/AU: 2626

Examiner: Jakieda R. Jackson

Docket No.: 810406 (Client Reference No. 2002P00160 US)

Customer No.: 95683

APPELLANTS' APPEAL BRIEF

Mail Stop Appeal Brief – Patents
Commissioner for Patents
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

December 21, 2011

Dear Sir:

In support of the appeal from the final rejection dated August 16, 2011, Appellants now submit their Brief.

I. Real Party In Interest

The patent application that is the subject of this appeal is assigned to Deutsche Telekom AG.

II. Related Appeals and Interferences

There are no appeals or interferences that are related to this appeal.

III. Status of Claims

A. Total Number of Claims in the application

There are 13 claims pending in the application.

B. Current Status of the Claims

1. Claims cancelled: 2 and 4-6
2. Claims withdrawn from consideration but not cancelled: None
3. Claims pending: 1, 3 and 7-17
4. Claims allowed: None
5. Claims rejected: 1, 3 and 7-17

C. Claims on Appeal

Claims 1, 3 and 7-17 are on Appeal.

IV. Status of Amendments

On March 20, 2009, Applicants amended claims 1, 16 and 17 and cancelled claims 4-6 without prejudice or disclaimer of the subject matter contained therein (claim 2 had been previously cancelled without prejudice or disclaimer) in an Amendment accompanying a Request for Continued Examination (RCE) in response to a final Office Action dated December 23, 2008. No amendments have been presented or entered in the present application since the March 20, 2009 Amendment. The claims as presented in the March 20, 2009 Amendment are set forth in the accompanying Claims Appendix.

This appeal is from the final Office Action dated August 16, 2011.

V. Summary of Claimed Subject Matter

Independent claim 1 recites a method for at least one of generating and expanding a vocabulary database of a speech recognition system (see, e.g., paragraph [0018] of the original specification). A computer-based audio module is provided (see, e.g., Fig. 2 (Audio Module 15) and paragraph [0018] of the original specification). The speech recognition system is trained by acoustic training using the audio module (see, e.g., paragraphs [0019]-[0021] of the original specification). The training of the speech recognition system is performed by: providing the audio module with vocabulary data in a streaming mode from a telecommunication network (see, e.g., Fig. 2 (Telecommunications Network 4) and paragraph

[0022] of the original specification) and speaking the vocabulary data to the speech recognition system in an automated manner using the audio module so as to expand the vocabulary database (see, e.g., Fig. 2 (Vocabulary Database 2) and paragraphs [0019]-[0021] of the original specification).

Independent claim 16 recites a speech recognition system comprising a vocabulary database and a text database (see, e.g., FIG. 2 (vocabulary database 2 and text database 13) and paragraphs [0038] and [0042] of the original specification). A computer-based audio module includes a speech synthesis unit configured to receive speech data in a streaming mode from a telecommunication network, the speech data being stored in a speech database (see, e.g., FIG. 2 (audio module 15, speech synthesis unit 14 and telecommunications network 4) and paragraphs [0022], [0043] and [0044] of the original specification). The speech data is spoken into the vocabulary database in an automated manner using the audio module so as to expand the vocabulary database (see, e.g., paragraphs [0019]-[0021] and [0044] of the original specification).

VI. Grounds of Rejection to be Reviewed on Appeal

A. Whether claims 1, 3, 7-11 and 14-17 are unpatentable under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as obvious over U. S. Patent No. 6,185,530 to Ittycheriah et al. ("Ittycheriah") in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,809,471 to Brodsky ("Brodsky").

B. Whether claims 12 and 13 are unpatentable under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as obvious over Ittycheriah, in view of Brodsky and in further view of U.S. Patent No. 6,393,348 to Besling et al. ("Besling").

VII. Argument

A. **Rejection of claims 1, 3, 7-11 and 14-17 as unpatentable under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a)**

It is respectfully submitted that, for the reasons set forth below, the rejections of independent claims 1 and 16, and their respective dependent claims 3, 7-11, 14 and 15; and 17, based on Ittycheriah and Brodsky should be withdrawn.

i. Background

Ittycheriah describes a method of comparing a word, which can uttered by a user into a microphone and received by a speech utterance pre-processor, to an existing vocabulary of words to determine potential acoustic confusion. See Ittycheriah, Abstract and col. 4, lines 16-25.

Brodsky describes a method of creating a small dictionary of items or keywords contained in closed caption text of a TV signal for a recently viewed program. See Brodsky, Abstract.

ii. The Examiner has been non-responsive

The U.S. Patent and Trademark Office's policy of compact prosecution "requires that both examiners and applicants provide the information necessary to raise and resolve the issues related to patentability expeditiously." See Official Gazette of November 7, 2003. However, it is respectfully submitted that, as described below, the Examiner has failed to be sufficiently responsive to Applicants arguments presented during prosecution of the present application in subsequent Office Actions.

In an Office Action dated December 22, 2010, the Examiner asserted that "automating requires routine skill in the art and as the court held broadly providing an automatic or mechanical means to replace a manual activity which accomplished the same result is not sufficient to distinguish over the prior art." See Office Action dated December 22, 2010, Page 2. For this reason, the Examiner maintained that Ittycheriah disclosed "speaking the vocabulary data to the speech recognition system in an automated manner using the audio module so as to expand the vocabulary database," as required by Applicants' independent claim 1 and that "the speech data is spoken into the vocabulary database in an automated manner using the audio module so as to expand the vocabulary database," as required by Applicants' independent claim 16. See Office Action dated December 22, 2010, Pages 3 and 6.

In the Response to the Office Action dated December 22, 2010 filed February 22, 2011, Applicants rebutted the Examiner's position that automating Ittycheriah requires only routine skill in the art by arguing that the automated manner recited in claims 1 and 16 is not

the mere automation of a known manual activity and provides substantially different results from Ittycheriah. These arguments are set forth in more detail in the following section.

In the subsequent Office Action dated March 11, 2011, the Examiner did not respond to this argument that “speaking the vocabulary data to the speech recognition system in an automated manner using the audio module so as to expand the vocabulary database,” as required by Applicants’ independent claim 1 or that “the speech data is spoken into the vocabulary database in an automated manner using the audio module so as to expand the vocabulary database,” as required by Applicants’ independent claim 16, would not be obvious in view of Ittycheriah, alone or in combination with any of the other cited references. Rather, the Office Action merely maintained that Ittycheriah specifically discloses these features. See Office Action dated March 11, 2011, Pages 3 and 6.

In the Response to the Office Action dated March 11, 2011 filed June 10, 2011, Applicants again argued that Ittycheriah, alone or in combination with any of the other cited references, fails to disclose or suggest “speaking the vocabulary data to the speech recognition system in an automated manner using the audio module so as to expand the vocabulary database,” as required by Applicants’ independent claim 1 and that “the speech data is spoken into the vocabulary database in an automated manner using the audio module so as to expand the vocabulary database,” as required by Applicants’ independent claim 16. In addition to arguments presented with respect to the alleged automation of Ittycheriah, Applicants argued that Brodsky also fails to disclose or suggest speaking vocabulary data to a speech recognition system in an automated manner so as to expand the vocabulary database, as required by the audio module of claims 1 and 16. See Response filed June 10, 2011, Pages 4-5.

In the subsequent final Office Action dated August 16, 2011, the Examiner asserted, with respect to Brodsky, that “the features upon which applicant relies (i.e., not temporarily stored) are not recited in the rejected claim(s)” and that “Brodsky teaches that the items, words or keywords can be spoken words, text, visual or audio information.” See final Office Action dated August 16, 2011, Pages 2-3. The Examiner concluded that “the combination of Ittycheriah with Brodsky is proper since Brodsky describes maintaining continuously changing dictionary of spoken words and Ittycheriah determines potential acoustic confusion

from a word spoken.” See final Office Action dated August 16, 2011, Page 3. However, the Examiner again did not address Applicants arguments that “speaking the vocabulary data to the speech recognition system in an automated manner using the audio module so as to expand the vocabulary database,” as required by Applicants’ independent claim 1 or that “the speech data is spoken into the vocabulary database in an automated manner using the audio module so as to expand the vocabulary database,” as required by Applicants’ independent claim 16, would not be obvious in view of Ittycheriah, alone or in combination with any of the other cited references. Rather, the Examiner merely maintained that Ittycheriah specifically discloses these features. See final Office Action dated August 16, 2011, Pages 4 and 6.

In the Response to the final Office Action dated August 16, 2011 filed October 4, 2011, Applicants again argued that Ittycheriah, alone or in combination with any of the other cited references, fails to disclose or suggest “speaking the vocabulary data to the speech recognition system in an automated manner using the audio module so as to expand the vocabulary database,” as required by Applicants’ independent claim 1 and that “the speech data is spoken into the vocabulary database in an automated manner using the audio module so as to expand the vocabulary database,” as required by Applicants’ independent claim 16. Moreover, with respect to the assertions in the final Office Action dated August 16, 2011 with respect to Brodsky (see final Office Action dated August 16, 2011, Pages 2-3), Applicants argued that claim 1 of the present application recites the step of “speaking the vocabulary data to the speech recognition system in an automated manner using the audio module so as to expand the vocabulary database” and that the buffer vocabulary of Brodsky is not used to speak vocabulary data to a speech recognition system in an automated manner so as to expand the vocabulary database, as required by the audio module of claim 1, and therefore cannot correspond to an audio module. Thus, it was respectfully submitted that the buffer vocabulary of Brodsky, which is merely a temporary database and is incapable of speaking vocabulary data, cannot be interpreted as corresponding to the audio module of claim 1.

Additionally, with respect to the assertion that “Brodsky teaches that the items, words or keywords can be spoken words, text, visual or audio information,” citing col. 4, lines 18-35 of Brodsky, Applicants argued that, in the cited passage of Brodsky, Brodsky also

describes that the items, words or keywords are generally given or converted to a text type format and that Brodsky fails to disclose or suggest any embodiment in which the items, words or keywords are spoken to the buffer vocabulary, nor does Brodsky provide any disclosure of how to speak the items, words or keywords which would enable an ordinarily skilled artisan to speak the items, words or keywords in an automated manner. Moreover, Applicants argued that Brodsky describes, in the Abstract, that “[t]he items or keywords may be contained in closed caption text in a TV signal” and is therefore generally given a text type format or otherwise, as described at col. 4, lines 20-24 of Brodsky, converted to a text type format. Thus, Applicants maintained the argument that each of Ittycheriah and Brodsky fail to disclose or suggest “speaking the vocabulary data to the speech recognition system in an automated manner using the audio module so as to expand the vocabulary database,” as required by Applicants’ independent claim 1 and that “the speech data is spoken into the vocabulary database in an automated manner using the audio module so as to expand the vocabulary database,” as required by Applicants’ independent claim 16.

In the subsequent Advisory Action dated October 14, 2011, the Examiner asserted that Brodsky was not used to teach “speaking the vocabulary data to the speech recognition system in an automated manner using the audio module so as to expand the vocabulary database,” but rather that Ittycheriah was. See Advisory Action dated October 14, 2011, Continuation Sheet. However, as discussed above, it is respectfully submitted that the Examiner has still never addressed Applicants’ arguments that “speaking the vocabulary data to the speech recognition system in an automated manner using the audio module so as to expand the vocabulary database,” as required by Applicants’ independent claim 1 or that “the speech data is spoken into the vocabulary database in an automated manner using the audio module so as to expand the vocabulary database,” as required by Applicants’ independent claim 16, would not be obvious in view of Ittycheriah, alone or in combination with any of the other cited references.

iii. Each of Ittycheriah and Brodsky fail to disclose or suggest “speaking the vocabulary data to the speech recognition system in an automated manner using the audio module so as to expand the vocabulary database,” as required by Applicants’ independent claim 1 or that “the speech data is spoken into the vocabulary database in an automated manner using the audio module so as to expand the vocabulary database,” as required by Applicants’ independent claim 16

Independent claim 1 of the present application recites a method of training a speech recognition system by “speaking the vocabulary data to the speech recognition system in an automated manner using the audio module so as to expand the vocabulary database.” Similarly, independent claim 16 recites that “the speech data is spoken into the vocabulary database in an automated manner using the audio module so as to expand the vocabulary database.” It is respectfully submitted that each of Ittycheriah and Brodsky fail to disclose or suggest the foregoing features of independent claims 1 and 16 and therefore that any combination of these references, to the extent proper, could not render claims 1 and 16 obvious.

In contrast, Ittycheriah merely describes providing a speech utterance pre-processor with words *spoken by a particular user* to determine potential acoustic confusion. See Ittycheriah, Abstract and col. 4, lines 16-25. Thus, it is respectfully submitted that Ittycheriah fails to disclose speaking the vocabulary or speech data to the speech recognition system in an automated manner using the audio module so as to expand the vocabulary database as respectively required by claims 1 and 16.

Moreover, it is respectfully submitted, as discussed above, that Applicants have rebutted the assertion from the Office Action dated December 22, 2010 that “automating requires routine skill in the art and as the court held broadly providing an automatic or mechanical means to replace a manual activity which accomplished the same result is not sufficient to distinguish over the prior art.” See Office Action dated December 22, 2010, Page 2. The foregoing Office Action’s assertion is taken from *In re Venner*, a case which dealt with claims directed to a known molding operation having known dwell times and including a timer and solenoid which automatically opened the mold after the known dwell times elapsed. See Manual of Patent Examination Procedure (MPEP), Section 2144.04 and *In re Venner*, 262 F.2d 91, 95 (C.C.P.A. 1958). It is respectfully submitted that the foregoing assertion is not applicable to claims 1 and 16 of the present application at least because, unlike in *In re Venner*, the recited automation is not the mere automation of a known manual activity and also provides substantially different results as described below.

In addition to being laborious and time-consuming, having a particular user provide speech data through speaking into a microphone or the like, as described in Ittycheriah, would merely provide acoustic training data that is based on the voice pattern of the particular user, which could differ greatly from the voice pattern of another person. See

paragraph [0015] of the original specification. Thus, the data used to train the voice recognition system will not match that of the person who will operate the system later. See paragraph [0015] of the original specification. Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that automating a process where a particular speaker provides speech data through a microphone, as described in Ittycheriah, would not operate to provide different voice patterns and would result in insufficient training of a voice recognition system which would only be effective for the particular user.

Moreover, it is respectfully submitted that Brodsky fails to disclose or suggest an audio module and therefore also fails to disclose or suggest speaking the vocabulary or speech data to the speech recognition system in an automated manner using the audio module so as to expand the vocabulary database as respectively required by claims 1 and 16. While Brodsky describes that items or keywords may be provided to a buffer vocabulary 104 in real time, Brodsky also describes that the buffer vocabulary 104 merely temporarily stores the items and keywords until the buffer is full. See Brodsky, col. 4, lines 49-57. As discussed above, it is respectfully submitted that the buffer vocabulary of Brodsky, which is therefore merely a temporary database and is incapable of speaking vocabulary data, cannot be interpreted as corresponding to the audio module of claims 1 and 16 which require the audio module to be used in speaking the vocabulary data to the speech recognition system in an automated manner.

Thus, it is respectfully submitted that each of Ittycheriah and Brodsky fail to disclose or suggest "speaking the vocabulary data to the speech recognition system in an automated manner using the audio module so as to expand the vocabulary database," as required by Applicants' independent claim 1 or that "the speech data is spoken into the vocabulary database in an automated manner using the audio module so as to expand the vocabulary database," as required by Applicants' independent claim 16.

Because each of Ittycheriah and Brodsky fail to disclose or suggest at least the above-recited features of independent claims 1 and 16, it is respectfully submitted that any combination of Ittycheriah and Brodsky, to the extent proper, could not render claims 1 and 16 or any of their respective dependent claims 3, 7-11, 14 and 15; and 17 obvious. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the respective rejections of claims 1, 3, 7-11 and 14-17 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) based on Ittycheriah and Brodsky is therefore respectfully requested.

iv. *Each of Ittycheriah and Brodsky fail to disclose or suggest “providing the audio module with vocabulary data in a streaming mode from a telecommunication network,” as required by Applicants’ independent claim 1, or “a computer-based audio module including a speech synthesis unit configured to receive speech data in a streaming mode from a telecommunication network,” as required by Applicants’ independent claim 16*

Independent claim 1 of the present application recites a method of training a speech recognition system by “providing the audio module with vocabulary data in a streaming mode from a telecommunication network.” Similarly, independent claim 16 recites “a computer-based audio module including a speech synthesis unit configured to receive speech data in a streaming mode from a telecommunication network.” It is respectfully submitted that each of Ittycheriah and Brodsky fail to disclose or suggest the foregoing features of independent claims 1 and 16 and therefore that any combination of these references, to the extent proper, could not render claims 1 and 16 obvious.

As acknowledged in the final Office Action dated August 16, 2011, it is respectfully submitted Ittycheriah fails to disclose providing an audio module with vocabulary or speech data in a streaming mode from a telecommunication network as respectively required by claims 1 and 16. *See* final Office Action dated August 16, 2011, Page 4. Because Brodsky fails to disclose or suggest an audio module, as discussed above, it is respectfully submitted that Brodsky could not disclose or suggest providing vocabulary or speech data *to an audio module* in a streaming mode from a telecommunications network as respectively required by claims 1 and 16. In determining the differences between the prior art and the claims, the question under 35 U.S.C. § 103 is not whether the differences themselves would have been obvious, but whether the claimed invention as a whole would have been obvious. *See* MPEP, Section 2141.02. When considering claims 1 and 16 as a whole, it must be considered that the buffer vocabulary of Brodsky is not an audio module and is incapable of speaking vocabulary or speech data.

Thus, it is respectfully submitted that each of Ittycheriah and Brodsky fail to disclose or suggest “providing the audio module with vocabulary data in a streaming mode from a telecommunication network,” as required by Applicants’ independent claim 1, or “a computer-based audio module including a speech synthesis unit configured to receive speech data in a streaming mode from a telecommunication network,” as required by Applicants’ independent claim 16.

Because each of Ittycheriah and Brodsky fail to disclose or suggest at least the above-recited features of independent claims 1 and 16, it is respectfully submitted that any combination of Ittycheriah and Brodsky, to the extent proper, could not render those claims or any of their respective dependent claims 3, 7-11, 14 and 15; and 17 obvious. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the respective rejections of claims 1, 3, 7-11 and 14-17 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) based on Ittycheriah and Brodsky is therefore respectfully requested.

v. *The proposed combination of Ittycheriah and Brodsky is improper*

It is respectfully submitted that the combination of Ittycheriah with Brodsky is improper. According to the final Office Action dated August 16, 2011, it would have been obvious to modify Ittycheriah's method as described by Brodsky to obtain and store expanded information for items and keywords. See the final Office Action dated August 16, 2011, Page 4. However, it is respectfully submitted that the Examiner has failed to articulate how Ittycheriah would be modified to use items or keywords provided to the buffer vocabulary of Brodsky, or what expanded information would be provided by the simple text, temporarily stored items and keywords of Brodsky. As discussed above, Brodsky merely describes maintaining a small, continuously changing dictionary of keywords entered in text format. However, such keywords would not be useful in the method of Ittycheriah which attempts to determine potential acoustic confusion from a word spoken by a user in comparison to a stored vocabulary of words. See Ittycheriah, Abstract. The buffer vocabulary of Brodsky is incapable of speaking. In fact, it would be impossible to determine potential acoustic confusion from a word input in text, and therefore the proposed modification of Ittycheriah to include the buffer vocabulary of Brodsky would render Ittycheriah inoperable for its intended purpose.

B. Rejection of claims 12 and 13 as unpatentable under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a)

It is respectfully submitted that Besling fails to cure the deficiencies of the proposed combination of Ittycheriah and Brodsky discussed above. Specifically, it is respectfully submitted that Besling also fails to disclose or suggest "speaking the vocabulary data to the speech recognition system in an automated manner using the audio module so as to expand the vocabulary database," as required by Applicants' independent claim 1 or that "the speech data is spoken into the vocabulary database in an automated manner using the audio module

so as to expand the vocabulary database,” as required by Applicants’ independent claim 16. Additionally, it is respectfully submitted that Besling fails to disclose or suggest “providing the audio module with vocabulary data in a streaming mode from a telecommunication network,” as required by Applicants’ independent claim 1, or “a computer-based audio module including a speech synthesis unit configured to receive speech data in a streaming mode from a telecommunication network,” as required by Applicants’ independent claim 16. Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that dependent claims 12 and 13, which depend from claim 1, are allowable over the cited prior art for at least the same reasons as independent claim 1 is.

Thus, it is respectfully submitted that, for the reasons set forth above, the rejections of dependent claims 12 and 13 based on the combination of Ittycheriah, Brodsky and Besling should be withdrawn.

CONCLUSION

For the foregoing reasons, the rejections of claims 1, 3 and 7-17 should be reversed. Appellants respectfully request that the application be remanded to the Primary Examiner with instructions to withdraw the rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 103, and pass the case to allowance.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any unpaid fees deemed required in connection with this submission, including any additional filing or application processing fees required under 37 C.F.R. §1.16 or 1.17, or to credit any overpayment, to Deposit Account No. 12-1216.

Respectfully submitted,



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Date: December 21, 2011

Appended hereto:

Claims Appendix

Evidence Appendix

Related Proceedings Appendix

Claims Appendix

Claims involved in the Appeal of U.S. Patent Application No. 12/205,539

Claim 1 (Previously Presented): A method for at least one of generating and expanding a vocabulary database of a speech recognition system, comprising:

providing a computer-based audio module; and

training the speech recognition system by acoustic training using the audio module,

wherein the training the speech recognition system is performed by:

providing the audio module with vocabulary data in a streaming mode from a telecommunication network; and

speaking the vocabulary data to the speech recognition system in an automated manner using the audio module so as to expand the vocabulary database.

Claim 2 (Canceled).

Claim 3 (Previously Presented): The method as recited in claim 1 wherein the training the speech recognition system is performed by providing the audio module with vocabulary data from a speech database.

Claim 4 (Canceled).

Claim 5 (Canceled).

Claim 6 (Canceled).

Claim 7 (Original): The method as recited in claim 3 further comprising creating the speech database by automated speech synthesis of text data using a speech synthesis unit.

Claim 8 (Original): The method as recited in claim 7 further comprising providing the text data from a text database.

Claim 9 (Original): The method as recited in claim 1 wherein the audio module includes a speech synthesis unit which converts text data to speech data.

Claim 10 (Original): The method as recited in claim 9 further comprising providing the text data from a text database.

Claim 11 (Original): The method as recited in claim 9 further comprising:

creating a text database in an automatic manner; and

providing the text data to the speech synthesis unit from the text database.

Claim 12 (Original): The method as recited in claim 11 wherein the creating the text database is performed by:

finding the text data in an internal or external telecommunications network using at least one search engine, the text data being associated with at least one search term;

receiving the text data from at least one text data source; and

automatically storing the text data in the text database.

Claim 13 (Original): The method as recited in claim 12 wherein the telecommunications network includes the Internet.

Claim 14 (Original): The method as recited in claim 12 wherein the creating the text database is performed by automatically reading the text data from the at least one text data source using a data processing system and wherein the automatically storing is performed using the data processing system.

Claim 15 (Previously Presented): The method as recited in claim 1 wherein the training the speech recognition system is performed by providing the audio module with vocabulary data from a speech database and further comprising:

creating the speech database by automated speech synthesis of text data from a text database using a speech synthesis unit; and

analyzing and processing the text data prior to the speech synthesis.

Claim 16 (Previously Presented): A speech recognition system comprising:

a vocabulary database;

a text database; and

a computer-based audio module including a speech synthesis unit configured to receive speech data in a streaming mode from a telecommunication network, the speech data stored in a speech database,

wherein the speech data is spoken into the vocabulary database in an automated manner using the audio module so as to expand the vocabulary database.

Claim 17 (Previously Presented): The speech recognition system as recited in claim 16 wherein a text database is generated by automatically searching the telecommunications network for text data related to a selected search term.

Evidence Appendix

No evidence pursuant to §§ 1.130, 1.131 or 1.132, or entered by or relied upon by the Examiner is being submitted.

Related Proceedings Appendix

There are no related proceedings, as set forth above. Hence, no related proceedings are included herewith.